



Farms to Food Bank Project Progress Report December 31, 2008

This report documents the work of four selected contractors receiving funds under the Farms to Food Bank Project of the Emergency Food Assistance Program, Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development. Contracts were signed, and the start of work was approved on November 20, 2008. The short period of time between the start of the contract and the first progress report limited the scope of what was accomplished by December 31, 2008.

The four selected contractors, locations, and contract amounts in FY 2008 – 2009 are:

- Food Lifeline, Seattle, - \$61,425
- Bellingham Food Bank, Bellingham, - \$50,217
- Washington Gorge Action Programs, Bingen, - \$92,678
- 2nd Harvest Inland Northwest, Spokane, - \$72,000

Planning with Food Bank Coalitions/Committees

Each of the contractors completed a Scope of Work element of working with their food bank coalitions or committees to define the program parameters, receive feedback on food purchase options, and agree on an ordering and delivery mechanism and schedule.

- **Food Lifeline** worked with the Seattle Food Committee's 29 members to draw up a list of priority products to purchase, developed a rotational list of 5 groupings of food banks to receive product throughout the contract, and created written documentation of their method of product choice and pricing strategy.
- **Bellingham Food Bank** met with the Whatcom County Food Bank Fresh Initiative's nine food bank members and agreed on a distribution formula and a transportation plan.
- **Washington Gorge Action Programs** met 3 times with Gorge Grown Food Network to finalize selection, ordering and delivery of purchased products.
- **2nd Harvest Inland Northwest** met with a Food Bank Coalition representing Spokane County, Wenatchee Food Distribution Center, Blue Mountain Action Council, and Rural Resources of Stevens County to select priority products, maximize benefits of funds, and arrange transportation and data tracking.

Initial Purchases

- **Food Lifeline** completed its first purchase of 15,000 lbs. of organic bulk beets from Full Circle Farm in Carnation. Other planned purchases for the period were delayed by flooding or not available because of early harvest necessitated by unusually cold temperatures.
- **Bellingham Food Bank** was not able to make any purchases but finalized negotiations for egg and milk purchases to begin in January. They will meet with

growers in January to finalize crop choices and contract growing goals and amounts.

- **Washington Gorge Action Programs** made 2 purchases of 1,275 lbs. of organically grown Butternut and Acorn Squash from J&K Growers, and a purchase of 720 lbs. of organic milk and butter.
- **2nd Harvest Inland Northwest** made 3 purchases of bulk red potatoes totaling 22,476 lbs. from an area grower and distributed them to 20 food banks in Spokane County and distributing agencies in Walla Walla, Stevens County and the 2nd Harvest branch warehouse in Kennewick.

Establishing Buying Relationships with Farms

- **Food Lifeline** met with 3 local potential farm vendors, and used volunteer resources to research and develop spreadsheets of priority items available from potential farm vendors and their contacts.
- **2nd Harvest Inland Northwest** initiated outreach to 40 local growers, inviting them to participate as farm vendors, and followed up on interest from tree fruit and potato growers.

Staffing

- **Food Lifeline** hired a part-time Purchase Program Coordinator with project funds who will begin work in January 2009.

Sharing of Program Model

- **Food Lifeline** plans to offer a food session on their Farms to Food Banks experience at their annual Agency Conference for its 300 member food banks and meal programs.